

Building Permits for Detached Structures (Garages, Sheds, etc.)*

In order to properly evaluate and expedite the release of a building permit, the following is typically required:

1. A scaled plat no smaller than 1 inch equally 100 feet. On this scaled plat, the following is needed: the existing or proposed building, parking, driveway, well, septic tank cleanout, septic reserve area (if applicable), and the percolation test locations. The property lines, as well as the objects within the property lines, must be to the same scale.
2. Structures considered temporary are sheds on non-permanent foundations. No temporary structure can be placed over the well or over any portion of the septic system. Reasonable separation should be kept for maintenance purposes.
3. Structures considered permanent are, but not limited to, the addition of living space, structures on footers, basement, crawl space, and slabs. No permanent structures can be placed in the septic reserve area, over the well, or over any portion of the septic system. There are distance requirements set forth by the state and county regulations which include twenty foot separation to the septic tank and thirty foot separation to the SRA or drainage disposal area. Variances are considered on a case by case basis.
4. Permits for permanent structures may require a septic tank certification, perc test, septic system upgrade or relocation, well upgrade, potable water tests, and/or schematic floor plans of the existing structure and the proposed construction. Any item required is based on file information, size of structure, and proposed use of the structure.
5. Permits that include living space require updated percolation test results for approval. Properties that cannot establish adequate waste disposal via a percolation test may be limited to expanding living space.
6. Most permits require a field inspection to determine the condition of the existing septic system and well, or the proposed location of the septic system and well, in relation to the proposed structure. Sometimes, a field inspection is not required if the existing system is less than ten (10) years old, providing that the plat and file information are satisfactory.

* Please note, building permits are applied for at the Harford County Administration Building, 2nd Floor, 220 South Main Street, Bel Air, Maryland 21014, and are distributed to the Health Department and other reviewing agencies.